

New England After 3PM



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Executive Summary

Some 20 percent of children in New England have no safe, supervised activities after the school day ends each afternoon. These children are in self-care, missing out on opportunities to learn and explore new interests, and at risk for any number of dangerous behaviors including substance abuse, crime and teen pregnancy.

Policy makers, parents and many other New Englanders recognize that children, families and communities benefit from quality afterschool programs. They know that an unsupervised child is a child at risk, and they want all the region's children to have a safe place to go that offers homework help, engaging activities and much more each afternoon.

New England is fortunate to have many strong afterschool programs that keep children safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. Some are groundbreaking models that will contribute to the design and structure of afterschool programs serving children and youth nationwide.

But there are not nearly enough afterschool programs in New England to meet the need. This report, the first ever to look at afterschool in the region, examines:

-  The need for afterschool programs in New England;
-  Studies documenting the benefits offered by these programs;
-  The status of key federal programs that fund afterschool;
-  Several quality afterschool programs in New England;
-  The work of the six state networks in New England that are pressing for more quality programs;
-  How states and communities are stepping up to meet the challenge;
-  What individuals and advocates can do to reach 'afterschool for all' in the region.

It concludes that, by taking a regional approach, lawmakers and advocates in New England can build enough private and public support for quality afterschool programs to eventually make them available to every child and family. When that happens, the region will be safer, its children better prepared for work and life, and its future brighter.

Introduction

New Englanders are increasingly concerned about the vast unmet need for afterschool programs, and inspired by the many wonderful programs that are making a difference to the region's children, families and communities. With 80 percent of children's waking

hours spent outside of school, more and more people recognize afterschool programs as an essential investment in keeping kids safe and engaged in constructive activities during hours that might otherwise be wasted in front of the TV or, worse, spent experimenting with risky behaviors like drug use, sex or crime. With so much at stake, it's no wonder that nine in ten voters believe that all children should have access to quality afterschool programs.

Recent stories from across New England highlight the wide variety of reasons why children, families and communities want and need afterschool programs. A recent *Providence Journal* story featured a new afterschool program at Greystone Elementary in Providence, Rhode Island that was started by teachers at the school who wanted to give students more enrichment opportunities. A March 2006 youth violence and handgun summit in Boston brought together city officials, university scholars and community leaders and afterschool programs were proposed as part of a larger strategy to curb youth violence. On Indian Island, Maine, an afterschool program is helping to preserve a native language and culture by teaching young children the Penobscot language. In Connecticut, YMCAs in Vernon and Hartford are helping kids learn about the benefits of healthy eating and being physically active in afterschool programs. Across the region, afterschool programs are meeting the diverse needs of children, families and communities.

The Afterschool Shortage

Quality afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working families and inspire learning. Yet the demand for such programs far outpaces the supply. An in-depth household survey released by the Afterschool Alliance in 2004, *America After 3PM*, reveals just how large the gap is. In communities nationwide, 14.3 million children take care of themselves after school, including almost four million students in grades six to eight. These children are missing important opportunities offered by afterschool programs to learn, prepare for successful careers, gain new skills and develop relationships with caring adults. Research shows that participation in afterschool programs can improve school attendance and performance, increase expectations for the future, and much more.

Quality afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working families and inspire learning.

Yet nationally only 6.5 million children - 11 percent of our kids - participate in programs. The parents of 15.3 million children would sign their children up for afterschool if a program were available. The national picture is reflected, with slight variations, throughout New England. In New England, only 14 percent or 347,618 school age children participate in afterschool programs, while 22 percent or 546,258 are alone and unsupervised during the hours after school. The parents of 640,611 New England

children would sign their children up for afterschool if a program were available. (See Table 4 for more New England detail.)¹

The public strongly supports afterschool programs; for many years now, nine in ten voters have demonstrated concern that America's children and youth are unsupervised afterschool, and seven in ten have said they would be willing to use taxpayer money to support afterschool through good and bad economic times. The support for afterschool cuts across political affiliations, income levels and regions, and is strong among people of every age, gender and race.

Clearly voters want and need a much greater investment in afterschool. Yet federal support for afterschool has stalled, with funding for the largest federal afterschool initiatives, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) and the Child Care Development Fund, frozen for years. While many states and cities have stepped up their investments in afterschool, the federal government must do its part if we are to achieve afterschool for all.

In New England, there are tremendously successful afterschool initiatives that serve as models for the nation, including Citizen Schools, BELL and SquashBusters in Massachusetts; Providence Afterschool Alliance, Afterzones and Community Schools in Rhode Island; Out of School Matters! in New Hampshire; and the EdGE in Maine. But, as is the case in most regions, progress has been spotty and there is still considerable work to do before all children have access to the afterschool programs they need. This report takes a regional view to portray an afterschool for all success story in progress, describing how New England is well positioned to join California in leading the nation toward afterschool for all.

The Stakes for New England's Children

Everyone benefits from the increased availability of afterschool programs. New England's children and youth, 22 percent of whom are unsupervised after school, benefit from safe, enriching afterschool environments. The most dangerous time for children and youth are the hours between when school lets out and parents return from work – hours that are often cited as “prime time for juvenile crime.” For example, teens who do not participate in afterschool programs are nearly three times more likely to use marijuana or other drugs.² Afterschool programs also advance learning. A recent statewide evaluation in New Hampshire found that 59 percent of elementary school and 62 percent of middle school students who regularly attended afterschool programs showed progress in overall academic performance.³ Research conducted by Yale University researchers found that children who participated in a 21st CCLC-funded afterschool program in New England had significantly higher reading achievement and were rated by teachers as holding greater expectancies of success compared to children

in other types of afterschool care. The differences were greatest for those children who were rated as highly engaged in the 21st CCLC-funded program.⁴

New England families benefit from the knowledge that their children are safe, getting help with their homework, connecting with caring adults and developing social skills and healthy habits

that will last a lifetime. In fact, 88 percent of New England parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with the afterschool program their child attends.⁵ This is important because business productivity, as well as parents' peace of mind, is at stake. Researchers at Brandeis University have found that, in general, parents who have more concerns about their children's after school arrangements report significantly higher levels of

New England Program Setting the Pace: Citizen Schools

Citizen Schools is a leading national education initiative that mobilizes adult volunteers to help improve student achievement by teaching skill-building apprenticeships after-school. Apprenticeships run the gamut: law, finance, architecture, journalism, website design, visual and performing arts, and much more. Citizen Schools blends these real-world learning projects with rigorous academic and leadership development activities, preparing students in the middle grades for success in high school, college, the workforce, and civic life.

Citizen Schools began in 1995 at Dorchester's Paul A. Dever school and with crucial public support from Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Boston Public Schools Superintendent Thomas Payzant grew to sites across Boston and beyond. Today, 2,000 students are enrolled and 1,500 volunteers work with youth at 22 school-based program sites in 11 cities across 4 states, including 9 middle schools in Boston and 8 more across Massachusetts.

A recent independent evaluation by Policy Studies Associates found that students participating in Citizen Schools' programs run at Boston Public Middle Schools (sixth, seventh, and eighth grades) are getting better math and English grades; scoring better on the Massachusetts state standardized exam (MCAS) in English language arts; have higher attendance rates and lower suspension rates; are more often enrolling in top-tier, college track-high schools; and performing better in ninth grade English and math coursework compared to a matched group of Boston Public School students. (www.citizenschools.org)

psychological distress, which is in turn linked with significantly higher scores on an overall measure of job disruptions. Parents with high Parental After-School Stress (PASS) (concerns about their children's after school arrangements) can indirectly cost companies in lost employee productivity. Parents with high PASS are three times more likely to be frequently disrupted at their job, and four-and-a-half times more likely to feel emotionally down. Parents with high PASS miss about eight days of work per year, not including vacation days, compared to parents with lower PASS who miss only three.⁶

Communities throughout New England benefit when youth are better equipped to become productive citizens who will give back to the community and the region. There

is a growing consensus that mastering the basics (reading, writing and math) is no longer enough to ensure that young people will be able to thrive in 21st Century workplaces and communities. In their book, *Teaching the New Basic Skills*, Richard Murnane and Frank Levy assert that the new basic skills include problem-solving, working on diverse teams, communication, and using technology such as word processing for basic tasks. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills identified nine learning skills, in addition to the core basics, that young people should have. These 21st Century skills include: Information and Media Literacy, Communication Critical Thinking and System Thinking, Problem Identification, Formulation and Solution, Creativity and Intellectual Curiosity, Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills, Self-Direction, Accountability and Adaptability, and Social Responsibility. Quality afterschool programs have been helping youth develop these skills, as well as reinforcing skills taught during the school day, for many years.

Demonstrating Resolve: Project 2010 and Congressional Caucuses

That lawmakers and others in New England value afterschool programs is evident in their participation in *Afterschool for All: Project 2010*, a campaign designed to demonstrate the diversity of individuals and organizations that support universal afterschool by the year 2010. *Project 2010* evolved out of several 2003 convenings and discussions among afterschool supporters, including Exploring Afterschool in 2010: Creativity, Improvisation, Innovation, held in February at the Getty Center in Los Angeles; the US Department of Education's After School Summit held in Washington, DC in June; and Advancing Afterschool 2010: Creating a Roadmap for the Future, held in July at the Cantigny Conference Center in Illinois. At the Cantigny meeting, participants expressed interest in advancing a vision of afterschool for all, and developed a set of principles about afterschool.

Project 2010 was born of this interest, creating a new vehicle to raise voices, individually and collectively, in support of afterschool for all. Launched in May 2004 with 250 partners, the *Project* has grown by leaps and bounds. Today, there are more than 3,000 *Project 2010* partners, including seven governors, 170 mayors, 120 police chiefs and national organizations such as AARP, the Children's Defense Fund, Citigroup Inc., IBM, the Mellon Financial Corporation, the NAACP, the NBA, NFL, MLB and NHL and the US Conference of Mayors. In New England, more than 115 individuals and 120 organizations have joined *Project 2010*, including Save the Children, National After School Association, Boston Red Sox, CVS, Berklee College of Music, The TJX Companies Inc., and the Departments of Education in Maine, Massachusetts and Connecticut. Among the notable individual signers are Providence's Mayor David N. Cicilline, Vermont Governor James Douglas, New Hampshire Governor John Lynch, Boston's

Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Portland's Mayor Nathan Smith. As Mayor Cicilline said, "The success of our young people depends on being able to be involved in high-quality after-school programs. These programs enhance their learning and help them grow and develop into future leaders that our city, state and country needs."

In March 2005, a vehicle for Congressional members to show their support for afterschool was created; the first ever Congressional Afterschool Caucuses are a clear demonstration of the federal lawmakers support for afterschool. The Afterschool Alliance worked with both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to recruit caucus members, and the region's lawmakers are strongly represented. Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT) co-chairs the Senate Afterschool Caucus, and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) is a Founding Member. Other New England Senate Afterschool Caucus members include Senators James Jeffords (I-VT), Ted Kennedy (D-MA), John Kerry (D-MA) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME). House Afterschool Caucus members from New England are Representatives Tom Allen (D-ME), Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), John Larson (D-CT), Stephen Lynch (D-MA), Michael Michaud (D-ME), Richard Neal (D-MA), and Bernie Sanders (I-VT).

Unmet Need, High Demand for Afterschool Programs in New England

In New England, more than one in five K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves after the school day ends each afternoon. These children, who spend an average of six hours per week unsupervised after school, would benefit greatly from community- or school-based afterschool programs. In safe, supervised environments, they would be able to get help with homework, participate in physical activity, explore new skills and talents, prepare for careers, and develop relationships with peers as well as adults.

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Currently, however, only 14 percent of New England's K-12 youth participate in afterschool programs. This low participation rate is not due to a lack of awareness or support for afterschool programs. The Rhode Island After School Plus Alliance's 2005 Parent Survey found that an overwhelming majority – 96 percent – of parents believe all children should have some type of organized activity or place to go after school. Eight of ten respondents of the Boston Afterschool for All Partnership 2003 Parent Survey believe that afterschool programming is an essential public service and critical to their children's academic and social success. In Massachusetts, overall parent demand for afterschool programs continues to grow, having risen from 75 percent in 1998 to 81 percent in 2003.⁷

A major reason for low participation is lack of access to quality afterschool programs. The most often-cited reason that Rhode Island parents gave for their children not participating in afterschool programs was lack of availability and lack of transportation. If access were improved, participation would increase dramatically. In a survey of Rhode Island parents, eighty-four percent said they would be likely to send their children to an afterschool program if one were available.

Navigating the Afterschool Funding Maze

Under the current funding system, afterschool providers and advocates are struggling to improve access and meet rising demand. There are several reasons for this.

First, few federal funding sources support afterschool programs directly. While this decentralized funding environment has spurred afterschool leaders to develop innovative public-private partnerships (with parks and recreation departments, social service agencies, police departments, local colleges, businesses and city governments, among others) to sustain their programs, the system is difficult to navigate. Funding streams are not coordinated and afterschool programs often find it difficult to utilize more than one funding source. Programs need direct, set-aside afterschool funding administered by one or two federal agencies, or increased coordination of the smaller funding streams controlled by various agencies.

Second, federal funding for afterschool is insufficient to meet the needs of New England families; funds are either declining overall or are allocated in such a way as to benefit some regions over others – and New England sometimes loses in these equations. In New England and elsewhere, afterschool needs increased federal support; support which often leverages more local, state and private foundation dollars, helps promote quality programs and aids families who can not otherwise find quality afterschool programs.

For example, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, one of the largest federal funding sources for afterschool, is unreliable and competitive even for previously funded applicants. When the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* changed the 21st CCLC structure from a federal competitive discretionary grant program to one that is state-administered, a Title I formula determined the amount of 21st CCLC funding in each state. It is recalculated annually based on poverty and population estimates. With no increase in 21st CCLC funding since 2002 (see Table 1) and because of slow population growth and population shifts to the South and West, New England in particular has lost out on 21st CCLC funding. From FY2004 to FY2005, 21st CCLC funding across the region decreased by more than \$5 million, with Massachusetts hit hardest by funding shifts.

Table 1. Funding History, 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Fiscal Year	Amount Appropriated	Amount Authorized in the No Child Left Behind Act
1998	\$40 million	n/a
1999	\$200 million	n/a
2000	\$453 million	n/a
2001	\$846 million	n/a
2002	\$1 billion	\$1.25 billion
2003	\$993.5 million	\$1.5 billion
2004	\$991 million (President Bush proposed \$600 million)	\$1.75 billion
2005	\$991 million (roughly the same as President's proposal)	\$2 billion
2006	\$981 million (President Bush proposed \$991 million)	\$2.25 billion
2007	To be determined -- \$981 million proposed	\$2.5 billion

With no new funding for 21st CCLC, New England states are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the demand for programs and many children are being left without afterschool programs as a result. As Table 2 below illustrates, nearly 70,000 children across the region will continue to be left without afterschool programs if the 21st CCLC program is level funded again in Fiscal Year 2007. Data from past years grant making reveals that the region has been struggling to meet the demand for afterschool. On average, states in the region were able to award grants to only one-half of all applicants in 2004; Connecticut was least able to meet funding requests and could award grants to only 26 percent of those who applied.⁸ In 2005, only two of the New England states – Vermont and Connecticut – were able to make any new 21st CCLC awards and even they were only able to make a handful of grants.⁹ See Appendix A for New England findings from *Impossible Choices*, which details the status of 2005 grant making in each of the states.

Table 2: New England Children Without Afterschool as Result of Flat Funding of 21st CCLC

	FY07 Budget Proposal	Estimated Number of Children Served at Proposed Funding Level	FY07 Proposed Funding Level Under NCLB	Estimated Number of Children Served at NCLB Full Funding Level	Estimated Difference, Number of Children Served
Connecticut	\$7,040,276	7,040	\$19,451,000	19,451	12,411
Maine	\$4,807,713	4,808	\$12,250,000	12,250	7,442
Massachusetts	\$14,469,278	14,469	\$42,286,000	42,286	27,817
New Hampshire	\$4,807,713	4,808	\$12,250,000	12,250	7,442
Rhode Island	\$4,807,713	4,808	\$12,250,000	12,250	7,442
Vermont	\$4,807,713	4,808	\$12,250,000	12,250	7,442
New England	\$40,740,406	40,740	\$110,737,000	110,737	69,997
<i>Estimated numbers of children served are based on cost of \$1000 per child</i>					

The Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), authorized by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, or welfare reform legislation,

provides critical support for low-income working families. Child care assistance helps parents continue to work and progress toward the financial security they need to leave welfare and remain off. But, since 2002, federal funding for child care has been frozen, causing the real value of CCDF funding to decline with inflation each year.¹⁰ The lack of new federal funds and the rising cost of child care combine to cause more low-income children to need afterschool and out of school time care.

Linked to CCDF, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds also have been used to support afterschool programs. The option to divert TANF funds to afterschool, however, is not straightforward and is increasingly limited. First, overall TANF spending is falling significantly as reserves from prior years are exhausted and funding remains fixed. Because the TANF block grant has been funded at a fixed level (\$16.6 billion a year) that is not adjusted for inflation, its inflation-adjusted value has already fallen by nearly 20 percent.¹¹ Second, fewer TANF funds are available for child care. In the early years of TANF, when cash assistance caseloads were down, states redirected freed-up TANF monies into child care programs, either directly or by transferring them to their Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF). As unspent funds have dwindled, states have scaled back the use of TANF funds for child care. This, combined with flat funding for CCDF has forced many states to scale back their support of child care, afterschool and out of school time care. In 2004, 30 states cut their child care assistance by a total of \$600 million. New Hampshire and Connecticut were among seven states that made the deepest cuts – cutting state assistance by 36 percent and 30 percent respectively. As a result of cuts in assistance, 3,000 children in Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont lost child care.¹²

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In addition, most CCDF and TANF funds support pre-school age children, so afterschool programs have been just one part – but every decrease is painful. Nationally, school-age children receive 36 percent of CCDF funds, although the percentage varies from state to state. Rhode Island uses 50 percent of their CCDF funds on school-age children, and in New Hampshire just 23 percent of CCDF funds go to afterschool.¹³

Much of the afterschool focus at the federal level is tied to supplemental education services, which uses Title I funds to provide tutoring to low-income students at schools the federal government deems as failing. A school must offer supplemental services when it fails to make adequate yearly progress, as determined by the state education agency, for three or more years. Of the 2,841 schools required to offer supplemental education services in 2005, just 125 are in New England. Thus, because of the small number of failing schools in the region, supplemental education services is not a substantial afterschool funding source for the region.

Finally, according to the 2000 census, the top two states in terms of ruralness are in New England; Vermont and Maine. These two states also have the highest percentage of public school students attending schools in rural areas.¹⁴ Sustaining afterschool programs in rural communities is particularly difficult. Rural communities often lack the community resources, like partners and funders, who help a program sustain over a long period of time. Due to small student populations, they also attract fewer youth, but the infrastructure to support the program is similar to that of larger programs; therefore, the per student cost is often higher. Federal and state funding sources are especially important to sustaining rural afterschool programs.

New England's Local and State Governments: Meeting the Challenge, Setting the Pace

Fortunately many of the region's states and communities have increased their investments in afterschool. Encouraged by the obvious benefits, diverse stakeholders are working together to improve quality, access and sustainability of afterschool programs at the state and local levels.

Communities Making Afterschool a Priority

Citywide initiatives, such as Boston's After School & Beyond (Boston Beyond) have improved access to programs. Boston Beyond was formed in 2004 as the successor to Boston's After-School for All Partnership and the Boston 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative. Boston Beyond is a public/private partnership to organize the many networks and organizations that make up the afterschool field into a coherent system with the goal of expanding access to high-quality programming for all of Boston's families. Between 1998 and 2003, Boston doubled afterschool participation and now leads the nation with one of the highest participation rates among U.S. cities. Boston Beyond estimates that 51 percent of Boston school age youth, or 48,000 children, participated in afterschool programs in 2003.¹⁵

The city of Providence has a similar goal to expand access to afterschool programs by creating a system of afterschool opportunities for all the city's children. The Providence After School Alliance (PASA) is a public-private partnership launched in July 2004 and led by Mayor David Cicilline. Its creation results from a comprehensive planning process that brought together more than 100 leaders from various sectors, including government, business, philanthropy and the community. PASA proposes to build effective program models and establish a citywide system that supports high quality afterschool programs and increase participation in them. One strategy for achieving this goal is to make quality afterschool accessible and convenient for youth and families through the creation of AfterZones. These zones will help provide safe, engaging, youth-

centered enrichment and learning opportunities as part of an organized, easy-to-navigate afterschool system. PASA, the City of Providence and community partners are committed to changing the neighborhood landscape for the benefit of youth and families across the city.

Bridgeport, Connecticut has made a commitment to provide afterschool at nearly every school in the city. In partnership with the school district, Bridgeport has grown its afterschool program base from ten schools 12 years ago to nearly all schools today, with programs in 28 schools that serve children from surrounding schools as well.

Evaluations

provide evidence that the K-8 program is improving both academic achievement and child well being, as does an ongoing Yale independent study following children for five years. The high number of principals serving on the program's advisory council, the strong support from the superintendent's office, and reliable community and parent participation demonstrate the strength of the partnership. Like so many other communities, the

challenge is to do the same or more with less each year. Tammy Papa, Director of Bridgeport's Lighthouse Program, explained. "We have strong community support. Besides \$1.2 million from the city, the school system decided to build five new schools with facilities providing afterschool and other community programs a permanent

New England Program Setting the Pace: BELL

BELL was founded in 1992 by a group of Black and Latino students at Harvard Law, led by Earl Martin Phalen and Andrew L. Carter. The students began a small tutoring program at Agassiz school in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where most children could not read, write or do math at grade-level proficiency. Since that time, every member of BELL's first class of students, known as scholars, has enrolled in or graduated from college -- compared to only 30 percent of their peers.

BELL offers After School and Summer Programs that feature small-group tutoring in literacy and math; mentoring from adult role models to foster self-respect and social skills; experiential learning through field trips, guest speakers and community service; support for parents to more deeply engage in their children's education; and rigorous evaluation to ensure continual improvement and success for children.

BELL After School meets for 2.5 hours per day at school-based sites. Scholars receive a nutritious snack before certified teachers and highly trained university students deliver one hour of literacy tutoring to scholars in small groups. BELL staff use a skills-based, multi-cultural curriculum to help scholars learn core reading and writing skills. Following literacy is 40 minutes of homework help, with an emphasis on math. Scholar-choice enrichment completes the day, and includes activities such as art, drama, dance and physical education. Special activities such as guest speakers and cultural presentations contribute to scholars' healthy social development.

The BELL After School Program is designed to boost children's academic and social achievements in a safe and supportive environment. In each of the last five years, every child entering BELL After School at the "failing" level advanced to a higher performance category. In 2005, more than 80 percent achieved "proficient" or "advanced" levels in core skills.

BELL currently educates more than 8,000 scholars in 40 public school sites throughout Boston, New York City, Baltimore and Washington D.C. More than 1,000 teachers and tutors work with scholars after school and during the summers. (www.bellnational.org)

location in the schools. It is a great testament to the community's embrace of afterschool programs." Recently, PSEG Power Connecticut helped Bridgeport's Lighthouse Program meet this challenge. PSEG donated \$25,000 and challenged companies in the greater Bridgeport area by offering to match dollar for dollar the first \$12,500 donated by other local firms with a goal of raising an additional \$50,000 for the Lighthouse program.

New Hampshire has benefited from a new initiative that helped many communities begin programs. For example, Barrington, a small rural community with less than 5,000 residents, invested in an afterschool program for middle school students (grades 5 – 8) supported largely by Nellie Mae Education Foundation funding. There is little else to do for youth in the afterschool hours in a community of this size. According to Cynthia Billings, CEO of Plus Time New Hampshire, "It is the most vibrant collaboration going, especially for youth in a small community where there is little else to do in the hours after school. If you can, imagine a 'club' designed program that offers Chinese culture and language, fly fishing, water color painting, orienteering, comic book writing and Spanish language. The program meets four days a week. It is awesome." At Barrington the superintendent has been a champion, the principal is a key partner, and youth help plan offerings for the enrichment program. The program is funded for several years, but leaders are thinking ahead and already looking to incorporate the afterschool program into the school budget. Evaluation results from a statewide study conducted by RMC showed strong results for students attending the afterschool program. And, Billings says, more New Hampshire communities are clamoring to do what Barrington was able to do.

Statewide Afterschool Networks Push for More and Stronger Afterschool Programs

The growth of statewide networks in each New England state has increased public support and brought the need for leadership to the attention of community leaders and policymakers. Statewide network accomplishments include:

In **Connecticut**, the state network used the Afterschool Alliance's *Lights on Afterschool* October 2005 celebration as an opportunity to engage policymakers and connect them with diverse afterschool supporters, from youth to school officials to businesses to providers to parent advocates.

To engage stakeholders in a policy discussion, Connecticut Afterschool Network (CAN) organized a press briefing and leadership roundtable. At the press briefing, House Speaker James Amann, named afterschool one of the top five Democratic priorities for the upcoming legislative session. The Connecticut After School Leadership Roundtable then commissioned a community needs assessment and strategy session that was attended by state businesses, foundations, state officials, community leaders and providers. The session gave groups the chance to brainstorm state and local level strategies to meet community afterschool needs. CAN also recognized exemplary

individual efforts by presenting six awards to "Children's Champions" at a gala luncheon.

The **Maine** Afterschool Network uses its partnership with the University of Maine at Farmington (UMF) to support development of tools and resources for afterschool providers and advocates. The network houses a resource database and lending library to support all aspects of programming. Afterschool program staff, school administrators, and community partners can take advantage of videos, pamphlets, publications and online resources covering a broad range of topics. The network also has a database of afterschool-related course work.

The Network works with students and faculty at UMF's College of Education, Health and Rehabilitation to ensure direct connections between afterschool and current practices in pre-service education. UMF's hands-on, interactive pre-service education programs combine theory and practice to allow for creative placements within the Network that help students apply education theory in afterschool settings and better understand how to maximize the linkages between in school learning and out-of-school learning.

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The **Massachusetts** Afterschool Partnership (MAP) supported the establishment of the Commission on After School and Out of School Time's and its \$100,000 allocation in the FY 2006 state budget. Supported by the Governor and state legislative leaders, the Commission is charged with studying afterschool in the state and making recommendations on how to improve, expand, and better coordinate accessible, affordable, quality out-of-school time programming for school age children in all settings.

To support the Commission's work to draft policy recommendations, MAP organized regional network meetings in fall 2005 to help develop recommendations and best practices. More than 300 people attended and contributed ideas. MAP is currently coordinating the feedback from the regional meetings and using the ideas to improve and finalize its recommendations to the Commission.

Plus Time **New Hampshire** has taken a leading role on the public-private New Hampshire State Task Force on Afterschool, created by then-Governor Jeanne Shaheen in 2002. Co-chaired by then Commissioner of Education Nicholas Donohue and PlusTime NH CEO Cynthia Billings, the Task Force was asked to develop a common reporting plan that over time would provide relevant data on the state's afterschool programs. RMC Research Corporation, a national leader in program research and evaluation, helped the Task Force organize and synthesize its work, which culminated

in the 2005 release of *Afterschool Learning: A Study of Academically Focused Afterschool Programs in New Hampshire*.

The first statewide description of academically focused afterschool programs, *Afterschool Learning* serves as a resource for local communities, legislators and policymakers. The report describes the effects of afterschool programs on students and, consistent with national research on the benefits of afterschool programs, finds that afterschool programs improve students' learning skills and academic success. PlusTime NH has since convened an Afterschool Policy Committee to form policy recommendations based on lessons learned from this research and will release these recommendations in February 2006.

The **Rhode Island** After School Plus Alliance (RIASPA) has worked to document the need for afterschool in the state as well as to develop tools that help providers and advocates dedicated to improving and strengthening afterschool programs. In 2004, with United Way's Community Schools—Rhode Island in the lead, RIASPA commissioned a survey of more than 400 parents of school-attending children ages 6 to 18. The study found that parents overwhelmingly support afterschool programs and feel that more should exist. Highlights include:

- 96 percent of parents agreed there should be some type of organized activity or place for their children to go to afterschool. 84 percent said they would be likely to utilize an optional afterschool learning and activities program.
- 75 percent of parents were supportive of a dedicated state tax to fund afterschool programs and 69 percent were supportive of an increase in federal taxes.
- Access is a problem. The most often cited reason parents gave for their child not participating in afterschool was a *lack of availability of such programs* and/or a *lack of transportation from school or to home for such programs*.
- 34 percent of parents admitted they know of children who are left alone at home afterschool at what they consider to be an inappropriate age.

Following their work on the Parent Survey, RIAPSA developed a Funding Opportunities Guide to help afterschool providers find support for their programs. Designed to enhance with sustainability, the comprehensive guide helps providers navigate the sources of public and private grants that may be available for afterschool.

The **Vermont** Out-Of-School Time (VOOST) Network has partnered with the Governor's Fit & Healthy Kids Initiative and the Vermont Department of Health to promote afterschool as a strategy for nutrition and physical activity promotion. In 2005, they piloted the research-based SPARK (Sports, Play, and Active Recreation for Kids) Program at five afterschool sites in the state.

A mixed group of 25 youth and adults attended the interactive SPARK training on November 8th in Montpelier, where they learned how to play and teach a variety of developmentally appropriate dances, sports, and cooperative and aerobic games. The five trained teams, each consisting of two youth and two adults, will bring SPARK back to their communities and serve as learning labs for future implementation. VOOST and the Vermont Department of Health are seeking additional funds with which to expand SPARK to many more out of school time programs in the state.

VOOST was one of the many individuals and organizations that contributed to the development of Vermont's Statewide Fit and Healthy Obesity Prevention Plan. The network plans to continue its work to combat child obesity by recruiting new partners who will support out of school time activities that promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for all youth.

In all six New England states, the statewide networks are developing strong partnerships that are supporting and improving afterschool. Through system building, resource development, needs assessments, identification of program outcomes and best practices, and policy engagement, networks in New England are actively supporting increased access, sustainable funding, and quality improvements for afterschool programs in their states. Their work, coupled with that of city officials and local program providers, is helping to position New England as a leader in achieving afterschool for all.

The Unfinished Agenda for Afterschool in New England

New England's families need quality afterschool programs more than ever. In most families, both parents or the single parent is in the workforce. The hours between 3 and 6 p.m. are the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex. The afterschool hours can be a time for trouble or a time when kids learn new skills, develop relationships with caring adults and prepare for the future.

New England has much to celebrate in terms of its progress toward afterschool for all, but more work lies ahead. Much of the progress to date has been localized, with the children in some communities left behind. Across the region, 546,258

school age children are alone and unsupervised during the hours after school and the parents of 640,611 New England children would sign their children up for afterschool if

Across the region, 546,258 school age children are alone and unsupervised during the hours after school and the parents of 640,611 New England children would sign their children up for afterschool if a program were available.

a program were available. In order to make afterschool programs available to all New England children who need them, all sectors of society (federal, state and local governments, foundations and corporate funders, businesses and others) must work together and do more.

Individuals and organizations across New England can contribute to afterschool for all by joining Project 2010, by encouraging members of Congress to join the Afterschool Caucus and to support more federal funding for afterschool, and by urging city and state leaders, businesses and foundations to invest in afterschool. Stakeholders can also work together to educate the public and regional media about the importance of quality afterschool programs. Table 3 lists the roles that individuals and organizations can play in supporting afterschool for all.

Table 3: How you can help support afterschool for all

Who	How
Individual Citizens	Join Project 2010 Encourage members of Congress to join the Afterschool Caucus Encourage elected officials to support increased funding for afterschool Contribute to local afterschool programs – either financially or by volunteering time, passion and expertise
City and state elected officials	Join Project 2010 Support increased public and private funding for afterschool Help create systems to support local programs
Members of Congress	Join the Afterschool Caucus Support increased funding for afterschool Support increased coordination of existing funding streams
Corporate and Foundation Leaders	Join Project 2010 Invest in afterschool programs and organizations that work on behalf of afterschool providers and the children and families who want and need programs
Afterschool Provider	Provide high quality services to children and families Join Project 2010 and recruit parents and partners to join Invite elected officials to visit your program Engage in advocacy and public awareness activities to draw attention to the benefits of programs and the need for more programs (See www.afterschoolalliance.org for details)
Public Education and the Media	Share stories of the need for more afterschool programs and the benefits of existing programs Print letters from readers about afterschool Donate free or reduced cost advertising to afterschool programs Volunteer and encourage others to do so

A regional approach to the problem may help New England meet the goal of afterschool for all. Beyond the obvious strength that comes with greater numbers, organizing on a regional level to support afterschool makes sense for a variety of reasons:

- New England legislators have come together to benefit their constituents in matters related to federal low-income housing programs, the Low-Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), changes to the Higher Education Act that would affect college and universities in New England, as well as on trade and commerce issues.
- New England boasts afterschool champions who are powerful members of the Senate from both sides of the aisle. The region has the opportunity to help build support for afterschool in Congress with Republicans and Democrats.
- New England states share common characteristics – small size, rural communities and a common media market. Thus, New England lawmakers can collectively pursue policy changes that will advance afterschool in the region.
- Fuel costs affect transportation and heating, and increased funding for afterschool would make it possible for more schools to stay open late and provide afterschool care.
- A strong higher education sector with significant economic influence exists throughout the region. Regional initiatives to link colleges and universities with afterschool programs would benefit New England children and families.
- New England states have all previously demonstrated commitment to afterschool by forming statewide afterschool networks and, in many cases, citywide intermediaries.

Each New England state has accomplishments to celebrate, but the region's collective accomplishments can be even more significant. A regional afterschool success story is possible in New England – because so many in the region value afterschool, because the benefits of afterschool programs are evident to so many New Englanders, and because so many sectors of society are already working to advance afterschool opportunities.

If stakeholders embrace the idea of a regional approach, New England's afterschool story is more likely to have a happy ending... an ending that makes afterschool programs available to all children who want and need them. It's an ending that is within reach, and it's an ending that the children and families of New England deserve.

Table 4: Afterschool Supply and Demand in New England

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22% or 546,258 New England K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves. • 30% or 640,611 children not in afterschool would be likely to participate if a program were available. • 88% of New England parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with the afterschool program their child attends. 	
<p>CONNECTICUT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26%, or 160,769, Connecticut K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves. • 22%, or 116,991, children not in afterschool would be likely to participate if an afterschool program were available in the community, regardless of their current care arrangement. • 90% of Connecticut parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with their afterschool programs. 	<p>MAINE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23%, or 53,018, Maine K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves. • 43%, or 84,252, children not in afterschool would be likely to participate if an afterschool program were available in the community, regardless of their current care arrangement. • 83% of Maine parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with their afterschool programs.
<p>MASSACHUSETTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21%, or 231,587, Massachusetts K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves. • 30%, or 294,447, children not in afterschool would be likely to participate if an afterschool program were available in the community, regardless of their current care arrangement. • 88% of Massachusetts parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with their afterschool programs. 	<p>NEW HAMPSHIRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23%, or 53,792, New Hampshire K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves. • 35%, or 67,123, children not in afterschool would be likely to participate if an afterschool program were available in the community, regardless of their current care arrangement. • 77% of New Hampshire parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with their afterschool programs.
<p>RHODE ISLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17%, or 31,267, Rhode Island K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves. • 28%, or 42,229, children not in afterschool would be likely to participate if an afterschool program were available in the community, regardless of their current care arrangement. • 99% of Rhode Island parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with their afterschool programs. 	<p>VERMONT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16%, or 18,165, Vermont K-12 youth are responsible for taking care of themselves. • 32%, or 30,155, children not in afterschool would be likely to participate if an afterschool program were available in the community, regardless of their current care arrangement. • 93% of Vermont's parents are extremely or somewhat satisfied with their afterschool programs.

Appendix A

Impossible Choices: How New England States are Addressing the Federal Failure to Fully Fund Afterschool Programs

This summarizes how the New England region was impacted by freezes in federal funding for afterschool programs in 2005. In 2006 the program again faced freezes and an across-the-board cut that amounted to an additional \$10 million dollar reduction for afterschool programs.

Connecticut was able to fund a small number of new 21st CCLC programs with FY 2005 funding. The state's total appropriation in FY 2005 was \$8,011,014, most of which was needed to keep previously funded programs operating. Based on current cost estimates, 21st CCLC programs in the state were able to provide afterschool opportunities for approximately 8,011 children and youth in Connecticut.

Maine was not able to fund any new 21st CCLC programs with FY 2005 funding. The state has experienced a one percent loss in funding since FY 2004 (nearly \$40,000). The state's total appropriation in FY 2005 was \$4,856,279, all of which was needed to keep previously funded programs operating. Based on current cost estimates, 21st CCLC programs in the state were able to provide afterschool opportunities for approximately 4,856 children and youth in Maine.

Massachusetts was not able to fund any new 21st CCLC programs with FY 2005 funding. The state has experienced a 23 percent cut in funding since FY 2004 (\$4.8 million). The state's total appropriation in FY 2005 was \$16,370,393, all of which was needed to keep previously funded programs operating. Based on current cost estimates, 21st CCLC programs in the state were able to provide afterschool opportunities for approximately 16,370 children and youth in Massachusetts.

New Hampshire was not able to fund any new 21st CCLC programs with FY 2005 funding. The state has experienced a one percent loss in funding since FY 2004 (nearly \$40,000). The state's total appropriation in FY 2005 was \$4,856,279, all of which was needed to keep previously funded programs operating. Based on current cost estimates, 21st CCLC programs in the state were able to provide afterschool opportunities for approximately 4,856 children and youth in New Hampshire.

Rhode Island was not able to fund any new 21st CCLC programs with FY 2005 funding. The state's total appropriation in FY 2005 was \$4,856,279, all of which was needed to keep previously funded programs operating. The state has experienced a one percent loss in funding since FY 2004 (nearly \$40,000). Based on current cost estimates, 21st CCLC programs in the state were able to provide afterschool opportunities for approximately 4,856 children and youth in Rhode Island.

Vermont was able to fund new 21st CCLC programs in FY 2005. The state's FY 2005 appropriation of \$4,856,279 was a decrease of one percent (nearly \$40,000) from FY 2004. Based on current cost estimates, 21st CCLC programs in the state were able to provide afterschool opportunities for approximately 4,856 children and youth in Vermont.

¹ *America After 3 PM*, Afterschool Alliance, 2003. Available at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/america_3pm.cfm.

² *After School for America's Teens*, YMCA of the USA, March 2001.

³ *Afterschool Learning: A Study of Academically Focused Afterschool Programs in New Hampshire*

⁴ Mahoney, J. L., Lord, H., & Carryl, E. (2005). An ecological analysis of after-school program participation and the development of academic performance and motivational attributes for disadvantaged children. *Child Development*, 76, 811-825 available at <http://pantheon.yale.edu/~7Ejlm79/mahoney.lord.carryl.2005.pdf>.

⁵ *America After 3 PM*, Afterschool Alliance, 2003. Available at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/america_3pm.cfm.

⁶ Community, Families & Work Program, Women's Studies Research Center, Brandeis University Report of Findings for the Parental After-School Stress Project are available at www.bcfwp.org/Research.html

⁷ http://www.afterschoolforall.org/about/Annual%20Report_03_04.pdf

⁸ <http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/21stcclmonitoringrpt.pdf> (Appendix A, Table A-1)

⁹ *Impossible Choices*, Afterschool Alliance 2005. Available at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Impossible_choices.cfm

¹⁰ Hannah Matthews and Danielle Ewen, *Child Care Assistance in 2004: States Have Fewer Funds for Child Care*, Center for Law and Social Policy, 2005. <http://www.clasp.org/publications/childcareassistance2004.pdf>.

¹¹ Martha Coven, *An Introduction to TANF*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Nov 2005. <http://www.centeronbudget.org/1-22-02tanf2.htm>.

¹² Clasp: State Child Care Expenditures (CCDBG and TANF Combined) and Average Number of Children Served (CCDBG), 2003-2004

¹³ Afterschool Investments State-by-State Comparisons: Percentage of Children Receiving CCDF Subsidies Who Are School-Age <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/percentFundedRep.htm>

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School

Universe, 2000-2001

¹⁵ *A Survey of Boston Parents About Their Children's Out-of-School Hours*, Boston's Afterschool-for-All Partnership, October 2003.

<http://www.afterschoolforall.org/news/ASFAP%20Parent%20Survey.pps#523,4,Background>